



UNITED NATIONS

# Daily Highlights

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## MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- + 121 United Nations peace-keepers released by Bosnian Serbs arrive safely in Croatia; Special Adviser Gharekhan says Secretary-General will not rest until remaining hostages are set free.
- + Croatian Army and Bosnian Croat forces attack Serb-held areas in Croatia; Special Representative Akashi contacts parties to defuse situation.
- + In message for World Environment Day, Secretary-General calls on global community to fight environmental degradation.
- + United Nations political office for Somalia to remain in Nairobi until security situation in Mogadishu improves, Secretary-General decides.
- + Danish doctor and Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting Health receive 1995 United Nations Population Award.

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The 121 United Nations peace-keepers released by the Bosnian Serbs on Friday arrived last night in Zagreb, where they were greeted by senior United Nations officials. Most of them then flew on to Split for medical check-ups and debriefings. Special Adviser Chinmaya Gharekhan said that Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali would not rest until all the remaining hostages were set free. As of this morning, 164 United Nations personnel were still being detained by the Bosnian Serbs, while another 179

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were being blockaded.

The Secretary-General sent his Special Adviser to Zagreb on Friday to assess the situation and to support the efforts of Special Representative Yasushi Akashi. Mr. Gharekhan intended to fly to Sarajevo this morning, but his aircraft turned around in mid-air because the Bosnian Serb authorities would not give adequate security guarantees. The Bosnian Serbs said that they would not endanger the aircraft, but warned that other parties might fire on it and blame them. Mr. Gharekhan and Mr. Akashi later met with the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg.

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The Croatian Army and Bosnian Croat forces yesterday began shelling Serb-held areas in Croatia, and launched an incursion in the direction of Knin, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Croatian Serb authorities responded by ordering a full mobilization of their forces. Special Representative Akashi contacted the parties in order to prevent the situation from escalating. The Croatian authorities assured him that the action was a limited one and not a major offensive against Knin, and the situation later stabilized.

The situation in Sarajevo remained tense and difficult today, the spokesman continued. Six civilians died there yesterday as a result of Bosnian Serb shelling. However, there was some good news from the Bosnian capital. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) managed to move 80 metric tons of wheat flour from a warehouse at the airport to a city bakery yesterday, and another delivery was expected today.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today called on the global community to fight actions that degraded the environment. In a message for World Environment Day, he said a sense of global consciousness was emerging for the first time. No political boundaries could stop the spread of poisonous gases or turn back effluents. If atmospheric pollution and the erosion of biological resources continued, the repercussions would be worldwide and would affect every generation to come, he warned.

The Secretary-General said it was appropriate that the main celebration of this year's World Environment Day was taking place in South Africa. One year ago, the South African people had dismantled the barriers that divided them, reasserting the values of compassion, love and tolerance.

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The Day was commemorated at Headquarters with a high-level panel presentation on women and the environment. The event was sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Department of Public Information (DPI), and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

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The Secretary-General has decided that the United Nations political office for Somalia will remain in Nairobi until the security situation in Mogadishu improves. In a letter to the Security Council President issued today, he said he had decided to reduce the staff of the office to one director at the D-2 level and one general service staff member.

The security situation in Mogadishu was unstable and unpredictable, and visits by international staff had been severely curtailed, the Secretary-General continued. Efforts to obtain the views of Somali leaders on a possible United Nations political presence in their country had yielded no results because of the opposition of the two principal leaders, Ali Mahdi and General Mohamed Farah Aidid. He noted, however, that many other Somali leaders had welcomed his intention to set up a political office in Somalia.

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Population issues must be addressed as an integral part of social and economic development, the Secretary-General told the 1995 United Nations Population Award ceremony today. He said last year's International Conference on Population and Development proved that the international community had the political will to work for a better quality of life for all. The Programme of Action adopted in Cairo could change the world for the better by providing people with broader choices and empowering them.

The Population Award was presented to Dr. Halfdan Mahler of Denmark and Dr. Berhane Ras-Work, who received it on behalf of the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (IAC). Dr. Mahler has been Secretary-General of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) since 1989, and served as Director-General of the World Health Organization from 1973 to 1988. Dr. Ras-Work is President of the IAC.

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